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Roxbury, Dec. 18, 1855.

My beloved friend, S. J. May:

I am pained to learn, by the Travel-
ler of last evening, that you are too ill to per-
form your pulpit duties; but the paragraph
does not state the nature of your sickness. I
earnestly hope that, though for the present disa-
bling, it is not serious. I believe you have
nearly completed your three score years and
ten; but though that is twenty years less than
the number reached the present month by your
uncle Samuel, it is so far beyond the average
of human life as to excite more or less anxiety
whenever you are prostrated. Though I am sev-
eral years your junior, I begin sensibly to
feel that I am "aging" fast; especially since
my nervous system has been so powerfully sha-
ken by my unlucky fall last March, from
the effects of which I have not yet recovered—
my arm and shoulder still causing me continual

pain — though I am certainly better than I was three months ago. It is for both of us to be ready at any moment to meet the summons for our translation to another sphere of life. With you it is a familiar thought, and perhaps my contemplation of it has not been less studious. I am not writing, however, as though I had heard or suppose that you are dangerously sick; only every fresh attack, however slight, upon our citadel of life, is a more significant reminder of our mortality. But I trust that, ere this reaches you, you will have become thoroughly convalescent, and able to move about again in society, every where by your genial and magnetic presence diffusing happiness, and by your labors doing good. Should this happily be the case, still remember, I pray you, that you are not in a condition or in a period of life to take upon yourself those responsibilities and duties which you once discharged with such elasticity of spirit, and take all the leisure and rest you can possibly command. "He also serves, who only stands and waits."

Since the Spring, I have been little better than a "cumberer of the ground," in consequence of the injury I then received; nor do I yet feel either in a mental or physical condition to pursue any particular employment. Moreover, my dear wife, for some time past, has been feeling very miserably, and this has drawn upon my sympathies, and made it dutiful for me (especially in the absence of Fanny and Frank in Europe) to give her all my time and attention — she having had no nurse, and finding it impracticable to obtain one to her mind. In these circumstances, I need not say, I have not attempted any lecturing whatever, nor done anything towards the preparation of my Anti-Slavery History.

Frank arrived in Munich on the evening of his 18th birthday, Oct. 29, and was there warmly welcomed by Mr. Villard and Fanny, with whom he has taken rooms, and from some one of whom we receive a letter regularly every week. They are all enjoying themselves highly, and will probably remain in Munich until next March, then go to Italy, and then to Paris.

Christmas and the New Year are near at hand, with their clustering associations and affectionate remembrances. Will you accept my heartfelt greetings and best wishes a little in advance? What blind devoteism characterizes the observance of the former anniversary in every part of Christendom! What crossings and genuflections are made, by the dupes of Papal superstition, at the sight of the image of Jesus! Yet how little do they know of his spirit, or the purport of his mission on earth! But in this ignorance our Protestant millions largely participate. What a stupendous work is that of universal human redemption! Yet it is ever going on to fruition, and manifestly with more accelerated speed, ^{now} than ever before. Let us be grateful to God if we have been permitted to do anything towards its grand consummation.

My wife sends to you her sympathies and affectionate remembrances; and joins me in kindest regards to aunt Charlotte, the beloved.

Your most attached friend,
Wm. Lloyd Garrison.

Rev. Samuel J. May.

Ms. A. 1. 1 v. 7, p. 25B